

“PEACE BE UNTO YOU” NO. 3456

**A SERMON
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*“And as they thus spake...Peace be unto you.”
Luke 24:36*

WE like to know how a person used to act, for we think we can infer from that how he will act. That is not always correct, however, for men change. But in our Savior's case, if we study His life, we may very well infer from what He did, what He will do, because He never changes. And this is a comfortable reflection for us at this time, that in the days of His flesh, while He was yet on earth, He loved the company of His people. If He changes not, then He loves the company of His people still.

He did reveal Himself, then, to one. He will still speak comfortable words to His people when they are alone. One by one will He reveal Himself to them. He did speak graciously to two. Where Christians converse on holy things, they may still expect that Jesus will Himself draw near. But more frequently He lingered longest and revealed Himself most in the assembly of His people. Where the eleven were met, where many were gathered together, there the Savior came, not once, but twice and often. Learn, then, that we may expect Him here tonight.

Peter, and James, and John are representatively here. Here, too, we have some of the goodly women—the Marys and Marthas are here. They are waiting for Him. Their hearts are longing for Him. He is the same now as ever. Brethren, we may expect Him. He will come to His old haunts. He will come and deal with His people as He did aforetime.

Twice, at least, we have it on record that our Savior came to His disciples when they were met on the first day of the week—from which I gather another comfortable thought, that as this is the first day of the week, we may for another reason expect Him to be here, to put honor on what now is the Lord's Day.

He, at least twice, for so it is on record, came to His disciples and standing in their midst, said, “Peace be unto you.” On this first day of the week, this Lord's-Day, at eventide I trust—I hope, nay, I expect, that you will feel Him here, and I pray that to each one of His people that soft word may come with power divine, “Peace be unto you.”

Without preface further than these words, let us draw your attention first, to *what He said*. Secondly, *when He appeared to say it*. And thirdly, of *what came of His appearance at the saying of it*.

I. OUR LORD'S GRACIOUS SPEECH.

What did He say? He said, “Peace be unto you”—four words, each full of meaning. May I not view those words in four lights? Was it not first *a salutation, a salutation and benediction?* Thus He introduced Himself, “Peace be unto you.” It was His good wish—more, it was His fervent prayer. He breathed peace upon them expressive of His goodwill, His love, His intense desire for their highest good.

Peace is the highest gift He can impart. Said the apostle, “Grace, mercy, and peace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ.” He had given them grace and mercy—He now gives them the highest benediction, peace. Did He not mean more than that?

In a second light it was a benediction. “Peace be unto you.” He had been into the invisible world and He had returned from it, and He tells them that there was peace reserved for them. He had passed the

veil with His own blood. He had offered up His sacrifice. He had said, “It is finished.” He had received the token that it was finished by His being raised from the dead.

And now He comes to them with the marks of His crucifixion still upon Him, and He tells them there is peace—it is done—“The war is over, the conflict is concluded—My bloody sacrifice and glorious resurrection have made peace between you and God.” “Peace be unto you.” It is the declaration of what He had seen and heard of the Father as the result of His death. A benediction and a declaration.

Was it not also a *fiat*? By a fiat I mean that kind of word which God spoke to the darkness when He said, “Light be,” and light was. Here they were in trouble and Jesus said, “Peace be,” and ere long peace was. It is always with Jesus to speak the word of power, for He is Himself the Word of power. He is God’s Word—the Word that built the heavens, the word that establishes the pillars of the universe, and when He speaks thus, it is not a mere wish, it is not a mere prayer, it is not a mere declaration, even, of a fact. It is the fulfillment of wish and prayer, and the application of the fact. “Peace be unto you.” Ere long they did receive the peace which He thus authoritatively gave them.

But may I not view it in another light, namely, *as an absolution*? Think a minute, and you will see it is so. These were they who had forsaken Him—there was one who had denied Him. Out of them all, there was no faithful spirit there at all, proved to be faithful in the hour of danger. Like cowards, each one had cared for himself and discarded his Lord. They had slept while He agonized. They had retreated while He advanced. They had left every man their Master to seek each man his own.

And now what says He to them? Stand they as culprits? Is He about to accuse them? Stand they as deserters? Is He, as a captain, about to condemn them? Nay, that one word seems to say, “It is forgotten. It is forgiven.” My only word to you is, peace, peace, peace. I know your weaknesses. I know your deep regret. I know how you lament that you served Me thus—regret no more, at least, be not depressed with such regrets, for lo! My only return to you is this, I give you My “Salem,” My salutation—My word of goodwill, My sweet word of love. I have not revoked My legacy, though I might well have destroyed My last will and testament. I said, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you.” I confirm that will now, risen from the dead. You shall see I have not cut you off from My affectionate regard. I, risen from the dead, declare what I declared when your love was warm and your resolution was rather to die with me than to desert me. I give you the same as I gave you then, “Peace be unto you.”

Now I think there are some sweet things rolled up in those brief thoughts which I have given you. The text itself has richness in it.

Now, my brethren, the second thing, and briefly, is—

II. WHEN DID JESUS STAND IN THE MIDST OF HIS DISCIPLES, and say thus, “Peace be unto you”?

When? Perhaps in considering the time, we may get some comfort and be led to hope that He will say the same tonight. Well, when did He come?

Well, first, *He came when they were quite unworthy of His coming*. We have already told you how they had served Him. Cowardly, they had deserted Him. But though there was no one there that could have even thought, much less said, “I deserve the Master’s company,” yet He came. Oh! I think we are, many of us, in the same plight. Looking back upon the past, we cannot feel that we deserve any love visits from the Savior. We dare not put up a plea on that ground. We are very unworthy—we are very unworthy—but that is no reason why He should not come. They were unworthy, but He stood in their midst and said, “Peace.”

Now note, next, that *they were very unprepared*. They were not looking for Him. They had not come together that night with any expectation—I am sure they were not, for when He did come they were afraid and thought they saw a spirit. They were least of all expecting Him to come.

Well, and my sister, you came in here unprepared. Do not excuse yourself, but yet do not despair about seeing your Lord. Brother, you came here perturbed, troubled. Your soul is not like the lake when it is still, which, like a molten looking-glass, reflects the stars above. But Jesus Christ can come and mirror Himself in your heart, first smoothing it with the word of peace.

Yes, yes, it is wrong to be unprepared for Christ's manifestation, but it is a thousand blessings that our unpreparedness does not keep Him away. I may expect to see Him, though unfit and unworthy. Come Savior, come, I beseech You, pass me not by. I might have feared You would if I had not seen that, in the case of the eleven, their unpreparedness did not bar the door. Oh! let not my unpreparedness keep You away.

Note, further, that our Lord came to them when *they greatly needed Him*. They had got into a disorganized, demoralized state as a band, and they were, every one of them, ready almost to give up their faith. The third day had passed, and they had not yet believed in His resurrection, though it had been witnessed to them. They were foolish and slow of heart, and I do not know what they might have done the next day, for he that is slow of heart and unbelieving today may go to something worse, if worse may be, tomorrow.

But they needed Him—they needed Him and there He was in the midst of them. Courage, then, my brother. You need Him—you may expect Him. Sister, you want Him—oh! how much! How much do I want Him! How would a visit from His love kill many of my sins and quicken all my graces! The physician comes not only when he is sent for, but when he knows he is wanted. The Good Physician does so especially.

It is not so much our sense of want as our want itself, that often brings Him. We frequently do not know our want until He comes and we see our want in contrast with the supply. Well, then, unworthy and unprepared, yet needing Him, we may expect Him. He will come if we cry out for Him. In our very midst He will stand tonight and Himself reveal Himself.

Moreover, it was a time when *they were exercising what spiritual light they had*—let that be recollected. They were in a low state, but they had met together, they had loved together. They were showing that, like a flock of frightened sheep, they were running together, hardly knowing what else to do. They did at last get near one another. There is something that Christ loves in that. That was good—there was something hopeful there.

Well, we, at least, have got together in the same way. I know you said, “Well, I don't know that I can do much in praising Christ, but I will go where His people are. Perhaps if I cannot praise, I shall get a blessing, for all that.” I know you often do so on the Sabbath. You say on the Saturday, “I am glad it is the last day of the week, that I may go where my brethren are, and while I come to get a blessing. I feel when I come especially to prayer meetings”—

*“There my best friends, my kinsmen, dwell;
There God, my Savior, reigns.”*

Well, the Lord Jesus loves to come where we love to be in His name. That helps to bring Him. So I have another good hope, that as we have come together, come together with no other end but that of stirring up what life we have, and of pouring out before Him what grace He has given, and of seeking more, that we may expect to see Him.

More than that—on that occasion when He came, there were *some of them who were testifying of what they knew*. Two of them were telling how they saw Him in the breaking of bread at Emmaus, and while the two spake, Jesus came. Now here stands one witness who can bear testimony that there is a living Savior, and a real one, and that His love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and as you hear that testimony, and many of you are recording in your souls your “Amen” to it, I hope He will stand in our midst and again say in spiritual language, “Peace be unto you.”

Once more, though, I say they were in a low state—*they were all lamenting their Master's absence*. I do not think, of all that company, there was one but what had a heavy heart and was sad, because Jesus was not there. If you had turned to Peter and said, “Peter, would you like to see Him?” He would have said, “Oh! for another look on those dear eyes, even though it broke my heart again.”

And John would have said, “Oh! for another leaning of my head upon that bosom, if I might be permitted such a favor.” And everyone, by dear remembrances of the past, would have said, “Alas, we have lost everything in losing Him. Take away the sun out of the skies, rather than take Christ out of the circle of our fellowship.”

Now, dear friends, have you, you lovers of the Savior, have you missed Him and are you now saying, “Oh! that I knew where I might find Him”? Well, our mingled notes shall reach Him and He will come and stand tonight in the midst of us, and we, again, shall rejoicingly honor and worship, while the King sits at His table with His people.

But time flies, and therefore, I give you but the bare outline of the rest of my sermon.

III. WHAT CAME OF IT?

What came of His appearance and of His speaking of peace? If you will look at the chapter when you are at home, you will see that, first of all, when Jesus came *He banished all their doubts*—He said to them, “Why are ye troubled; why do thoughts arise in your hearts?”

Now, if He comes here tonight, in the midst of this assembly, that is just what He will do to you troubled ones. He will say, “Why are ye troubled?” You, perhaps, might answer, “Perhaps there is cause enough for it,” but He will reply to it, “All things work together for your good.” “When thou passest through the rivers, I will be with thee; the floods shall not overflow thee.” “Cast your care upon me.”

“Why are ye troubled?” And He would then ask you the very question, “Why do those thoughts arise in your hearts?” You would have, perhaps, to guiltily confess what those thoughts were. You thought He was too hard. You thought He had forgotten you. You thought He was not true, after all—that He did not love you. You thought He would fail you. I will not tell you all your thoughts, but they have been naughty thoughts, and if He is here tonight the blush will mantle on your cheek, while you will say, “I will never have such thoughts again, but I will henceforth say, ‘Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.’” There is one cure for evil thoughts like this—the vanished Savior manifested to the eyes of faith.

Then our Lord next proceeded *to reveal Himself*. Being present—which He might have been, you know, and yet they might not have known Him—He now went to reveal Himself and make them see Him. This is what He did. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have.”

Then He proves His kinship with earth, His real manhood, for He took a piece of broiled fish and of a honeycomb, and did eat before them all. Now even so will He do tonight. If He were here tonight, it were no use to you if these scales were upon your eyes—He will take them off. Those harder scales on an earthbound heart, He will take them off.

Oh! I have been wondered, my brethren, I bear witness I have wondered sometimes when the Lord has taken away the stone out of my heart, to feel my own sudden tenderness. I have even sat at that table sometimes, and dealt out the bread and wine to you, and longed to be but a dog beneath the table, to eat but a crumb that fell from it—and on a sudden I have felt His nearness and rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

And oftentimes in preaching, when my spirit has felt like a frozen brook, His grace has thawed my heart. Is not this what the Spouse meant when she said, “Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Ammi-nadib”? Now it is the presence of Christ that quickens us. Let the prayer be put by each one, “Quicken thou me, O Lord, according to Your Word. Yourself, the Word, draw near to me and I shall be quick to perceive You, to embrace You, to rejoice in You this night.”

Then the next act of our Savior was to proceed *to inform their understanding*. You observe He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. Nearness to Christ is an education. Get near to Jesus and you will find that the Corpus Christi is the true college. He who knows the body of Christ has got the body of theology, the body of divinity—the true theology of the Word of God. He that knows Him has understanding.

With all your getting, get understanding. And from Him you shall get it, for He is wisdom. And is He not the truth, and is He not the incarnate wisdom? With Him God took counsel before ever the earth

was. There is no studying the Scriptures that becomes so useful as when we study them with Christ to turn over the leaves for us.

Then the next thing was *He refreshed their memories*. Perhaps I ought to have mentioned this before, because it occurs first. He said to them, “These are the words I spake to you.” Tonight, perhaps, if Jesus is here, you will remember these other times when you have seen Him—

***“His former visits we recount
When with Him in the holy mount.”***

Yes, you will say as Jesus is here, “I do remember You and the love of Your espousals. I do remember other sweet seasons when I was with His people, and my heart glowed at His love.” You will look back, some of you grey-headed brethren in Christ—you will look back, perhaps, fifty years, and remember when Jesus first looked in at your soul. Dear memories! Perish all else but the relics of Christ, the traditions of His presence in my spirit—these will I hand down from year to year, and record them evermore. Nothing like this to set the memory right, the immediate, actual presence of Christ, even at this moment.

And then, beloved, in addition to all this, the Savior’s thus appearing *showed them their true position*, for He told them that they were His witness of these things. When they saw Him they felt they were something more than mere lookers-on, they were to be tellers and testifiers to others. I hope we shall feel this tonight, that we shall go out from our seats and from the communion table, saying, “I have seen the Lord, and I will be a witness in my own family—I will be His witness in the court, or the street, or the city where I dwell. I have seen Him and shall I close my mouth concerning Him? No! His presence has opened my mouth, that I may show forth His praise. I will go in the strength of the Lord, making mention of His righteousness, even of His only.”

And last of all, that blessed presence *created intense joy*, though there was a wonderment about the joy that mingled it with unbelief, and we read, “While they yet believed not for joy.” They were very, very glad. If you had seen them go into that house, and seen them come out, you would not have known they were the same men.

Yet they were no richer, no healthier, no more favored, but they had seen the Lord, and they were glad. It is especially recorded by John, “Then were the disciples glad when they had seen the Lord.” Oh! there will be singing here. There will be music in your hearts. You will trip home with merry foot, if Jesus Christ do come.

Come, then, dear Master. You have bled for us. You have loved us with an everlasting love—’tis but a little thing comparatively that we ask. Your relationship to us binds You to grant it. You will not be a stranger to Your own flesh. You will not hide Yourself from those who are members of Your body, of Your flesh and of Your bones. Your delights were with the sons of men and You have not changed.

Oh! if ever You did reveal Yourself, reveal Yourself to us tonight. Melt us down under the glory of Your presence. Dissolve us with the superlative majesty of Your love, and we will worship and bless You forever and ever.

Now I have said nothing to those of you who know Him not, but I will say these words and have done. His worth—

***“His worth if all the nations knew,
Sure all the world would love Him too.”***

God bless you. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

PSALM 32; JOHN 17

PSALM 32

“A Psalm of David, Maschil”—that is to say, an instructive psalm—“Maschil.” I suppose that David wrote it after he had been forgiven and restored to divine favor. I think we may read it as a part of our own experience, either of conversion or when restored after backsliding.

Verses 1-2. *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*

Twice he says, “blessed.” He had felt the weight of sin. He had been sore troubled, but now that Nathan is sent to him with the word of pardon, “The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die,” he counts himself doubly blessed—blessed, not the man who has never sinned. Blessed is he who, having sinned, is forgiven. Not the man who has no sin, but whose sin is covered.

Wonderful word! Both in English and Hebrew, it sounds very much alike. The sacred “Kophah,” the cover which covers sin so that sin is hidden, even from the eye of God Himself! A wondrous deed! Blessed is the man who knows that divine covering! “Blessed,” says he “is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”

All along, after David’s sin, he became very crafty and very cunning, full of guile. You know the dodges that he had resorted to, to cover up his sin—he tried to play some of his tricks on God Himself, but he felt it was a mischievous and foolish thing to do. He was uneasy, he was unhappy. We have sometimes heard it said that after David sinned, he remained insensible for nine months—until he received the divine rebuke—but it was not so.

He remained very sensitive, very depressed, very unhappy, and he was trying this way and that to cover up his sin and guile. He could not do it. He ought to make a clean breast of it and confess it before God, and give up his crooked ways, and his ideas of excusing himself, and when he had done that, when he had given up his guile and his guilt, too—then he got the double blessing. “Blessed, blessed!”

If there are any of you who are treading crooked ways with God and man, give them up. I know of nothing that will make you give them up like knowing free, full, perfect pardon through the precious blood of Christ and the free grace of God. The two things go together, guilt and guile. The two things go out of us together—when guilt is pardoned, guile is killed. Now hear how David felt while he was conscious of his sin and yet was not right with God.

3. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

A wanton glance and the sin with Bathsheba. Where was the pleasure of it when it cost him all this? Such groaning that his very bones get old, as if they were rotten, and his heart was heavy as if he wished to die. “For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me.” God was dealing with him. God with His hand pressing him heavily, forcing his sin home upon him, making him say, “My sin is always before me.”

Oh! the misery of sinning to a child of God. Do not dream that we can ever have any pleasure in sin. The worldling may, but the believer never can. To him it is a deadly viper that will fill his veins with burning poison.

4. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

When he tried to pray, it was a dried-up prayer. He tried to make a psalm, but it was a dried-up song. He tried to do some good, for he was still a good man, but it was all withered without the Spirit of God. His moisture was gone out of him, turned into the drought of summer, and summer in David’s country was a very droughty thing, indeed.

Every human thing despaired, the grass seemed to turn to dust—it was so with him. If you go into sin, this is what will happen to you. If you are a true child of God, you will have all the joy of God taken from you, all the moisture of your heart dried up, and you will be like a parched, withered thing. “Selah”—time to stop, time to have a pause in the music—he was on so bass a key, he had need now to tighten the harp strings and rise to something a little sweeter.

5. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD: and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

He must come to confession, full, spontaneous, unreserved—there must be a resolution. “I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord”—a firm determination to hide nothing, to see the sin yourself, and to tell the Lord that you see it, and to confess it with great grief and sorrow. What a wonderful word that is, “I said, I will confess, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.” God took away the sin. Ay, the very pith and marrow of it, “the iniquity of my sin.” Take the bone away and the marrow of the bone too. “Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin”—it has all gone, wholly gone—by one stroke of God’s divine grace the sinner was pardoned. Selah again

6. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

“For this” (because of this and for this blessing) “shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found.” The pardoning God must be sought. There is an attraction in the greatness of His mercy. They that are godly, even though they have offended and gone astray, must come back and seek for pardon in a time when You may be found.

“Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.” The godly man is safe when the floods are out. There are times when great waters prevailed in David’s country—the brooks sometimes turned to rivers and came down with a rush when they were least expected. And here he says that when such a thing as that shall happen, yet God’s people shall be saved. They shall come, but they shall not come nigh unto them.

Let me read those words again. If you have gone to God in the day of your sin, and have found pardon, He that took away the sin will take away the sorrow. “Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.”

7. Thou art my hiding place: thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

“Thou art my hiding place”—precious words! “Thou art my hiding place”—not “Thou are a hiding place,” but “Thou art MY hiding place.” A man who is beset by foes does not stand still and say, “Yes, I can see there is a hiding place there,” but he runs to it. Beloved, run to your hiding place this morning, each one of you who can have a claim and interest in Christ. Run to Him now and say, “You shall preserve me from trouble.”

David has come up out of the roaring to the singing. All the day long he roared, and now all the day long he sings. He hears songs everywhere. He lives in a circle of music, his heart is so glad. Well may he put another “Selah,” for he has smitten the strings very joyfully and they need tuning again.

8. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

And here the speaker changes—“I will instruct thee.” I have forgiven you. “I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.” I have restored you back to the way. Now I will teach you in the way you shall go. “I will guide thee with mine eye.” Your own might lead you astray. “I will guide thee with mine eye.” I will be on the path, I will fix My eye upon you. “I will guide thee with mine eye.”

9. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

“Be ye not as the horse,” not only David, but all of you. If God will guide you, be guided. If He will teach you, be teachable. If He will be gracious to you, be gracious towards Him.

10. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

“Many sorrows shall be to the wicked.” David had found that out—his sin had brought him a transient pleasure, but a lasting misery. He shall have a bodyguard of mercy. God will be gracious to him, tender to him, and will not leave him if he is trusting in the Lord.

11. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

“Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous.” Be glad. Well, but you cannot always be glad, says one. “Be glad in the LORD”—you may always be glad in Him. Here is an unchanging source of joy. “Rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy.” Here is the man that was silent, has gone as far as shouting now. Is it not enough to make him? Twice he was blessed, in the first and second verses, and now he has been pardoned, he has been delivered, he has been compassed about with mercy—why, he must be glad! “Shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.” God bless you in the reading of His Word.

JOHN 17

Verses 1-2. *These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*

Here we have the two doctrines of a general and a particular redemption. Through His death, Christ has power given Him over all flesh, but the distinct, especial object is the salvation of His own—“that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.”

3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

To know God in the sense of being acquainted with Him—loving Him—abiding in fellowship with Him—this is life eternal. To know God in Christ Jesus is to be saved indeed.

4. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

Which no other man could ever have said—not even Adam in his perfection, for his work was not finished—and alas! how marred it was before it came near to finishing! And the most gracious man that ever died could not, in his last moments, say, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do,” for it was still imperfect. There were many things which he would wish to have done, and many errors which he would wish to have rectified. But our Lord is more than man, and rises to this point—“I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”

5. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

“I have disrobed Myself to be Your Servant. Clothe Me again with the garments of My majesty. Let me come back to the palace when I shall have passed through the stream of death.” So far is the prayer for Himself.

Now He prays for His people.

6-7. *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.*

“They have not accepted Me as a human teacher on My own account, unsent and uncommissioned, but they perfectly understand that there is a union between the Father and the Son. The things that You have given Me are of You.”

8. *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.*

There are great depths in these words. One of the greatest of German divines always refused to preach from this chapter, for he said he felt that few of God’s people had a sufficient measure of faith to understand it. And when he came to die, he had this read to him three times before he fell asleep. There is a world of wonderful mystery. Though the words are short and plain, yet the sense is fathomless.

9. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*

There is an intercession of Christ which is for all the world, but His choicest intercession—His effectual prayer—is for His own. Nothing, perhaps, makes men so angry as this statement. They cannot endure that God should dispense His gifts according to His own will—but so it stands true. There is an

intercession in which none have a part but His own. “I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.”

10-11. *And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.*

They will be left therefore. The Shepherd will be gone. They will seem to be like orphans with their best friend departed.

11-13. *Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

He asks not only that they may be kept and so unharmed, but that they may be comforted, and so made glad. O sad hearts, hear your Redeemer’s prayer for you—and do not doubt that it is answered—“that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.”

14. *I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

If nobody hates you for being a Christian, are you a Christian? If you find that you run with the general herd, and swim with the current, can you be a follower of that Christ who was despised and rejected of men?

15. *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*

Not that they should shut themselves up in monasteries and convents. That is not the prayer of Christ. “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”

16-19. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

Sanctify Myself—consecrate Myself—set Myself apart—for their salvation that they also might be sanctified, consecrated, set apart through the truth.

Now comes a third part of the prayer, in which He pleads for the whole church—for that part of it at that time not saved—for the unborn ones—for us.

20-21. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

Our Savior knew how apt we should be to split up into sects, and to be divided into parties, and so He prays again and again that we may be one. Cultivate the spirit of Christian affection. If there be divisions, let them not come through you. Contend earnestly for the faith, but also let us love one another.

22-23. *And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

Surely the passage seems to culminate here. These words rise like the peak of a mighty Alp almost out of our sight into the clear brightness of heaven—“have loved them as thou hast loved me.” Now, believer, you cannot fully comprehend this, but believe it—that as surely as the Father loves the Son, as and after the same manner also He loves you—without beginning, without measure, without change, without end. “Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.”

24-26. *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou*

hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Let us read that wonderful passage again—“that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them.”

26. *And I in them.*

Sacred, mystical union! May our souls enjoy it day by day.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.